

The Shul of New York
Yizkor ~ Memorial Service 5781

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The Yom Kippur *Yizkor* service has a unique quality that sets it apart from the three other *Yizkor* services throughout the year. Throughout Yom Kippur, we pray to *Eloheinu v'lohei avoteinu*, Our God and God of our ancestors. We ask God for forgiveness with the hopes that we will be granted another year of life to open our hearts and improve our actions, reflective of the values and ideals we treasure. We have prepared ourselves by doing *t'shuvah*, reflecting on our human interactions, asking forgiveness from those we may have hurt knowingly or unknowingly, in hopes of repairing and strengthening relationships.

The day also allows for us to reflect on the relationships that we have had with those who are no longer in our world. Yom Kippur sets the stage for us to be more vulnerable and float between the fine line of life and death. As we contemplate our own mortality, we recall those who have passed to the other side. We see their faces, hear their voices, feel their presence as though they are with us. The *Yizkor* service is a time to acknowledge the ever presence of the Holy One of Being, as the God of our ancestors, as our God, and as the God eternal. We are reminded that we are all children of God, passing through in a moment of time and space as droplets in the vast ocean of humanity.

The prayers we recite during the *Yizkor* service are directed to God with supplications that the memories of our loved ones 'be for a blessing'. We pledge *tzedakah* as a token of helping to perpetuate their memory in the eternal cosmos and ask that the person's Soul "rest in peace forever in God's presence." (in the liturgy). We are directed to Remember~ Re-Member the Soul of martyrs, congregants, victims of the Shoah, and this year, all those around the globe who were defeated by the coronavirus. We also acknowledge there are many deceased who have no one to remember them as part of the ongoing thread of humanity. YHVH never forgets. We are blessed with the task to reminisce about the Souls that have gone on to Eternity, so that they will be remembered favorably.

We Remember

We remember those who lived, learned,
prayed, celebrated and mourned with us in times gone by.
We remember mothers and fathers who built a foundation for our lives.

We remember the partnership of spouses.

We remember the love that made those relationships holy.

We remember brothers and sisters.

We remember children, taken before we were ready.

We remember friends who touched our lives.

May this sanctuary be a safe container for our memory and our grief.

O God, on this holy day, help us to remember.

And we say together:

Let their memories be a blessing.

In recalling their struggles, we become able to face our own.

Let their memories be a blessing.

In reflecting on their joy, we become able to savor our own.

Let their memories be a blessing.

Give us the courage to transform loss into hope for the future.

Let their memories be a blessing.

And we say: Amen.

To Every Thing There Is A Season

~Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

*To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under heaven.*

A time to be born, and a time to die,

A time to plant, and a time to uproot.

A time to kill, and a time to heal,

A time to break down, and a time to build up.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh,

A time to mourn, and a time to dance.

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather them together,

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.

A time to seek, and a time to lose,

A time to keep, and a time to cast away.

A time to rend, and a time to sew,

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.

Life After Death

By Laura Gilpin

These things I know:
How the living go on living
and how the dead go on living with them
so that in a forest
even a dead tree casts a shadow
and the leaves fall one by one
and the branches break in the wind
and the bark peels off slowly
and the trunk cracks
and the rain seeps in through the cracks
and the trunk falls to the ground
and the moss covers it
and in the spring the rabbits find it
and build their nest inside the dead tree
so that nothing is wasted in nature or in love.

We enter the world...

Ecclesiastes Rabbah 5:14

*We enter the world in the same way we depart.
We enter with a cry and go with a cry.
We enter with weeping and go with weeping.
We enter with love and go with love.
We enter with a sigh and go with a sigh.
We enter without knowing and go without knowing.
It has been taught in the name of Rabbi Meir:
When we enter the world our hands are clenched, as if to say,
"The whole world is mine. I shall inherit it."
But when we take leave of it, our hands are spread open,
as if to say, "I have taken nothing from the world."*

Silent Prayers of Remembrance

It is tradition to sit in silence and reflect on the people who are no longer alive. This is not only an opportunity to remember our deceased loved ones, but also an invitation to look through the window at our lives and remember the Souls who have helped shape us. Notice if any words and images arise. Is there something you would like to express to your loved one? Forgiveness? Gratitude? Admiration? Incomplete business? Unspoken words? This may be your time to listen to the words that will help bring healing and completeness to your relationship.

In memory of a father:

May God remember the soul of my father who has gone to his eternal reward. I pledge acts of justice and charity in his memory. May his soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May he rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of a mother:

May God remember the soul of my mother who has gone to her eternal reward. I pledge acts of justice and charity in her memory. May her soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May she rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of a husband:

May God remember the soul of my husband who has gone to his eternal reward. May his soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May he rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of a wife:

May God remember the soul of my wife who has gone to her eternal reward. May her soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May she rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of a son:

May God remember the soul of my beloved son who has gone to his eternal reward. May his soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May he rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of a daughter:

May God remember the soul of my beloved daughter who has gone to her eternal reward. May her soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May she rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of other relatives and friends:

May God remember the soul of my relatives and friends who have gone to their eternal reward. I pledge acts of justice and charity in their memories. May their souls be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May they rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

In memory of those who died to sanctify God's Name:

May God remember the souls of our brothers and sisters, martyrs of our people, who gave their lives for the sanctification of God's name. I pledge acts of justice and charity in their memories. May echoes of their bravery and devotion be heard in our lives and may the purity of their hearts be seen in our actions. May their souls be bound in the bonds of eternal life. May they rest in the perfect joy of Your presence. Amen.

Eil Maleh Rachamim: God of Compassion

Eil maleh rachamim, shochen ba-m'romim. Hamtze m'nucha n'chonah tachat canfei ha-shekhinah, im k'doshim u-t'horim k'zohar harakia mazhirim, l'neshamot y'kareinu shehalko l'olama, b'gan Eden t'hei menuchatam. Ba'al harachamim yastirem b'seter k'nafav l'olamim, v'yitzror bitzror ha-chayyim et-nishmoteihem, Adonai hu n'chالاتam. V'yanuchu bashalom al mish-k'voteiheim, v'nomar: Amen.

Compassionate God, Spirit of the universe, grant perfect peace in Your sheltering Presence, among the holy and the pure who shine with the splendor of the heavens, to the souls of our dear ones who have gone to their reward, may the Garden of Eden be their rest.

O God of mercy, guard them forever in the shadow of Your wings. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life. May they rest in peace. And let us say: Amen.

Psalm 23

A psalm of David: God is my shepherd; I shall not want.
God makes me lie down in green pastures,
and leads me beside still waters to restore my soul;
God leads me in paths of righteousness for the sake of God's name.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You set a table before me in the presence of my enemies
You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.
Truly goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life
And I will dwell in the house of Adonai forever.

Eli, Eli

Hannah Szenes

Eli, Eli shelo yigameir le'olam

Hachol vechayam

Rishrush shel hamayim Berak hashamayim

Tefilat ha'adam

My God, my God, I pray that these things never end:
the sand and the sea, the rush of the waters,
the crash of the heavens, the prayer of the heart.

Mourner's Kaddish

*Yitgadal v'yitkadash, shmeh rabah. B'alma divra chiruteh, v'yamlich malchuteh b'chayyeichon u'v'yomeichon u'vchayyei d'chol beit Yisrael. Ba'agala u-vizman kariv v'imru **amen**.*

Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varakh l'olam ol'almey almaya.

*Yitbarach v'yishtabach, v'yitpa'ar v'yit-romam v'yit-naseh. Vyithadar v'yitaleh v'yithallal shmeh d'kudh'sha, b'rich hu. L'eyla ul'eyla min kol birchata v'shirata, tushbechata v'nechemata, damiran b'alma, v'imru **amen**.*

*Y'hei shlama raba min shemaya v'chayyim tovim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru **amen**. Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya'aseh shalom, aleinu v'al kol yisrael, v'al kol yoshvei tevel, v'imru **Amen**.*

Magnified and sanctified! May God's Great Name fill the world God created. May God's splendor be seen in the world in your life, in your days, in the life of all Israel. Quickly and soon! And let us say, Amen. Forever may the Great Name be blessed! Blessed and praised! Splendid and supreme! May the holy name, Bless God, be praised, far beyond all the blessings and songs, comforts and consolations, that can be offered in this world. And let us say: Amen. May there be peace and life, great peace and life from heaven above for us and all Israel. And let us say, Amen! May the One who makes peace in the high heavens make peace for us, for our whole community, and for all the peoples of the world. And let us say: Amen.

Limnot Yameinu ~from Psalm 90

*Limnot Yameinu Keyn Hoda, v'navi l'vav chochma
Teach us to treasure each day
That we may open our hearts to your wisdom.*